



Superior Court of California County of Riverside

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MEDIA ADVISORY

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(electronic version available at: <http://riverside.courts.ca.gov/media/media.shtml>)

SENATE BILL 1190 PASSES JUDICIARY COMMITTEE, PROVIDES NEEDED JUDGES FOR INLAND EMPIRE

RIVERSIDE COUNTY:

An important bill, introduced by Senator Hannah-Beth Jackson of the 19th District, which will provide the Inland Empire with additional judges, passed the Senate Judiciary Committee on Tuesday, April 22, 2014, by unanimous vote.

Senate Bill 1190 (SB 1190) will provide funding for 50 judges statewide, judges that were allocated in 2007 but never funded so those additional resources were never provided to the state courts. Once funded, the bill will provide nine additional judges each to the Riverside and San Bernardino Superior Court benches. The bill also increases the number of appellate court justices in the Fourth District (located in San Bernardino/Riverside) from seven to nine.

Lastly, the bill would authorize an additional 50 judges statewide, dependent on future funding. The judges would be allocated to the various superior courts pursuant to uniform criteria approved by the Judicial Council, the governing body of the state courts, and based on current workload measures – a significantly important component of allocation.

According to the Judicial Council's 2012 update of the Judicial Needs Assessment, Riverside County Superior Court has a verified need for 138 judges. With only 76 judicial officers, the court needs an additional 62 judges to provide appropriate access to justice for Riverside County residents. The report shows that San Bernardino County Superior Court needs 156 judges.

The much needed judges provided for in SB 1190 will be a significant factor in the restoration of critical court services for Inland Empire citizens. Because of a lack of judgeships, the court in Riverside County has been forced to delay hearings, continue cases, limit hours, increase wait times, and reduce overall public services. These reductions affect all residents, but are especially critical in cases involving children, families, and the elderly.

Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee include Senator Joel Anderson, whose district covers portions of Riverside County. Speakers at the April 22th hearing included Riverside County Superior Court Presiding Judge Mark A. Cope, San Bernardino County Superior Court Presiding Judge Marsha Slough, and Justice McConnell, the Administrative Presiding Justice of the 4th District Court of Appeal.

The bill now heads to the Senate Appropriations Committee as it progresses through the legislative process.